

Message Text

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ACTION SMI-01

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 H-02 CU-02 FS-01 ABF-01 AGR-05 CIAE-00

COME-00 DODE-00 DOTE-00 EB-07 EPA-01 HEW-02 HUD-01

INR-07 INT-05 LOC-01 NASA-01 NSAE-00 NSF-01 OMB-01

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EO 11652: NA

TAGS: SCUL EG

SUBJECT: SMITHSONIAN/SFCP: THIRD U.S. CONTRIBUTION TO "INTERNATIONAL
CAMPAIGN TO SAVE THE MONUMENTS OF NUBIA (PHILAE) THROUGH UNESCO

REF: STATE 69799

1. EMBASSY BELIEVES IT DESIRABLE TO SUPPORT THIRD CONTRIBUTION TO SAVE

PHILAE MONUMENTS. IT IS WORTHWHILE NOT ONLY FROM STANDPOINT INTRINSIC
VALUE OF PROJECT IN RELATION TO MAN'S CULTURAL HERITAGE, BUT AT THIS
JUNCTURE IN ME SITUATION FROM POLICIAL POINT OF VIEW AS WELL. OUR
FAILURE TO CONTINUE U.S. SUPPORT WILL BE VIEWED NOT SIMPLY AS
PENALIZING UNESCO, BUT ALSO EGYPT.

2. RECENT SUSPENSION OF SINAI DISENGAGEMENT TALKS HAS NATURALLY
RAISED IN MINDS OF SOME EGYPTIANS VALUE OF CONTINUED CLOSE COOPERATION

WITH U.S. CONTRIBUTION TO PHILAE AS VERY TANGIBLE WAY
OF DEMONSTRATING CONTINUING U.S. INTEREST IN EGYPT BY RELATING IT
TO PROJECT WHICH IS CLOSE TO HEART OF EGYPTIANS. PHILAE ASSISTANCE
IS LIKELY TO OBTAIN MORE MILEAGE IN PUBLIC EYE THAN MIGHT ORDINARILY
BE RECEIVED THROUGH ASSISTANCE AT SIMILAR LEVEL IN OTHER PROJECTS.

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3. ON ECONOMIC SIDE, PHILAE MONUMENTS ARE AN IMPORTANT ELEMENT IN EGYPT'S TOURIST ATTRACTIONS. TOURIST INDUSTRY IS OF CONSIDERABLE SIGNIFICANCE TO A NATION WHICH HAS SERIOUS ECONOMIC TROUBLES AND BALANCE OF PAYMENTS PROBLEMS.

4. AS FOR PROJECT ITSELF, IN RECENT DISCUSSIONS WITH DR. GAMAL MOKHTAR, DIRECTOR OF ANTIQUITIES, WE WERE TOLD PHILAE RESTORATION IS MOVING FORWARD VERY WELL. PRES SADAT VISITED SITE A FEW WEEKS AGO IN COMPANY OF SHAH OF IRAN. SADAT EXPRESSED GREAT PLEASURE IN WAY PROJECT WAS PROGRESSING TO POINT OF ORDERING THAT ALL WORKERS BE GIVEN ON-THE-SPOT SALARY INCREASES. ACCORDING TO MOKHTAR, PHILAE IS VERY MUCH IN SADAT'S EYE. MOKHTAR ALSO TOLD US EGYPTIANS ARE EXCITED ABOUT FACT EXECUTIVE BOARD OF UNESCO WILL BE HOLDING ITS NEXT SESSION IN OCT IN EGYPT, AT WHICH TIME PHILAE WILL BE PRIME TOPIC OF INTEREST.

6. FOR ABOVE REASONS BELIEVE DETERMINED EFFORT SHOULD BE MADE TO CONVINCE APPROPRIATE INSTITUTIONS AND CONGRESS OF IMPORTANCE OF MAKING THIRD CONTRIBUTION TO PHILAE.
EILTS

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